

## IS IT PEACE OR WAR?

THE question of peace or war between capital and labor includes several questions: whether there is at the present time peace or war between these two great powers, and if it is war, what they are fighting for; whether war is better than peace, and if not, how the war is to be brought to an end and peace is to be made—whether by capital subjugating labor, or by labor subjugating capital, or by finding some way of uniting their interests.

The question whether peace or war now exists in the industrial realm need not detain us long. The answer is too easy. Optimists have been diligently assuring us, for a score of years, that there was no such thing as a labor question, except in the minds of a few crazy agitators; that everything was lovely in the industrial world, and constantly growing lovelier; that those beautiful harmonies of the French economist were sure to make everybody rich and contented and happy very soon. Few are now heard talking in this strain. Everybody admits that the relations between the working classes and their employers are extremely uncomfortable; the strikes, the lockouts, the boycotting, the rioting here and there, make up a large share of the telegraphic news in our daily papers. The state of industrial society is a state of war, and the engagement is general all along the line.

### THE FRUITS OF COMPETITION.

THIS state of things is the natural result of a system of pure competition. Competition means conflict. The proposition is disputed, but if any philosopher wishes to test its truth by a scientific experiment, let him gather a crowd of twenty urchins together upon the sidewalk and address them as follows: "Here is a handful of coppers, which I propose to divide among you, and I wish to tell you how I am going to make the distribution. To begin with, you have all got to stand back on the other side of the curbstone; then I shall heap the coppers on that flat stone; then, when I give the word, let each one of you come forward and take what he can get. The only principle, my dear young friends, that we can recognize in the distribution of this fund is the principle of competition. Neither justice nor charity can have anything to do with it. Under competition, the political economists tell us, everybody gets a reasonably fair share. All ready! One, two, three—grab!" If our philosopher will stand by now and watch his experiment, he will see reasons

for believing that competition is not uniformly a beneficent force. In the first place, it will turn out that the biggest boys will begin at once, while he is talking, to crowd themselves up nearest to the curbstone, and nearest to the pile of coppers, pushing back the smaller boys. Likely enough they will have a fight for this vantage-ground while he is making his speech explaining the beauties of competition. When he gives his signal they will rush in at once, trampling on one another, the strongest, of course, seizing the largest share, and many of the little boys getting only a stray copper or two that may be dropped from the hands of their more greedy and powerful companions as they make off with their booty. This is the way that competition works. The whole story of the competitive régime is outlined in this thumb-nail sketch of the curbstone financiers. Competition means war. And the law of war is the triumph of the strongest.

What is it that the scientific people tell us always happens in the struggle for existence? Is it not that the strongest individuals and the strongest races kill off the weakest? Competition is the struggle for existence, which is the law of the inferior races, adopted as the law of industrial society. It works in society exactly as it works among the inferior races. I will not stop to argue whether or not it is a good thing to kill off the weaker classes; my only point now is that under a system of which competition is the law this is the tendency. Naturally, the weaker classes object to being killed off, and fight against it with what strength they have; hence the conflict which always must accompany a system of pure competition.

### COMBINATIONS FOR WAR PURPOSES.

IT may be admitted, however, that a system of fair competition would work better than the existing system. If all the competitors were equally intelligent and equally strong, and if our laws were able to prevent classes among them from securing by unjust means unfair advantages, then we should see a different state of things from that with which we now have to deal. For, bad as unrestricted competition would be, we have something now that is worse. Fair competition between the strong and the weak, between men of trained faculty and men of low intelligence, is pretty sure to result in combinations on both sides, by which the bitterness of the conflict is greatly intensified. This is what we are confronting to-day. Competition, as the reg-



ulative principle of our industry, has utterly broken down, and combination has taken its place. It began with the establishment of those great financial and industrial corporations in which capital was encouraged by the state to combine, and, thus organized, was exempted from certain liabilities and given advantages which the individual proprietor does not possess. And these corporations, and the great business firms and banking institutions in which the savings of many are consolidated under the management of one, have learned the art of combining among themselves, so that, in all branches of industry and commerce, competition is greatly crippled where it is not killed, and prices as well as wages are largely fixed by conferences, and syndicates, and pools of all sorts. Is it competition that determines freight rates and railway fares? Not at all. The best part of the railroad business of the country is done under agreements between the great companies. The price of oil, the price of coal, the prices of many of the common necessities of life are determined much of the time by combinations among the producers or the dealers. "Our various industries," says the Rev. Josiah Strong, "are combining to force down production — that means that workmen are thrown out of employment; and to force up prices — that means increased cost of living. There are lumber, coal, coke, oil, brick, nail, screw, steel, rope, fence-wire, glass, wall-paper, school-book, insurance, hardware, starch, cotton, and scores of other combinations, all made in the interests of capitalists. Small dealers must enter the 'pool,' or be crushed. Once in, they must submit to the dictation of the 'large' men. Thus power is being gathered more and more into the hands of conscienceless monopolies." On the other side, there are powerful combinations among the workmen which seek to control the rate of wages and the hours of labor, and sometimes to prevent improvements in industry — combinations rapidly increasing in numbers and in power. Under this reign of combination there is no longer any such thing as free or fair competition. The individual coal operator in the Hocking Valley cannot compete with the other operators for the labor of the miners; he is tied up by an agreement to pay no more than a certain price. The individual miner cannot compete with his fellows for the wages offered by the operators; he is bound by his union to take no less than a certain price. And these combinations on all sides are made for fighting purposes. The big dealers combine that they may crush out competition, and kill off the small dealers. The employers combine to fight the workmen, and the work-

men combine to fight the employers. Doubtless it is an illusion to suppose that competition, under the best conditions, while human nature remains what it is, would ever give us peace; however that may be, it is certain that the combinations which have so largely supplanted competition are calculated to give us nothing else but war. And war it is, bitter, and destructive, and desolating. "Masters and men," says a great Belgian economist, "are in a state of constant warfare, having their battles, their victories, and their defeats. It is a dark and bitter civil war, wherein he wins who can hold out longest without earning anything; a struggle far more cruel and more keen than that decided by bullets from a barricade; one where all the furniture is pawned or sold; where the savings of better times are gradually devoured, and where at last famine and misery besiege the home and oblige the wife and little ones to cry for mercy."

#### WHAT ARE THEY FIGHTING ABOUT?

THE war arises in the division of the product of industry. The capitalist employer on the one side, and the laborer on the other, are fighting over the wealth produced by their joint exertions. The capitalist says that the laborer wants more than his fair share, and the laborer says the same thing about the capitalist; the capitalists, on the one side, combine to keep the laborers from getting any more, and the laborers, on the other side, combine to get as much more as they can. Then the question of the hours of labor comes in; the laborers contending that the world's work can be done in fewer hours, and the employers as a general rule resisting that demand. Still other matters in dispute are the right of the workmen to combine, and their right to dictate to the employer whom he shall employ. The workmen think that if they are to succeed in this conflict they must be able to combine and to bring the whole force of labor into the combination; and the employers think that if they are to succeed they must prevent the combinations of laborers by some means or other. Perhaps both are right. I cannot see how the workmen can win the battle without uniting; and I am equally unable to see how the masters can win unless they can break up the unions. Such attempts as that of the manufacturer in Springfield, Ohio, to crush the labor organizations, are perfectly logical if war is the proper relation between labor and capital. Such attempts as those made by the employees of the Third Avenue railroad to compel the company to discharge some of its old hands because they would not join the union are natural and legitimate, if war between employer and em-



ployee is the necessary and normal condition of things. These are war measures on both sides. Are they right? They are right, if war is right. Is it right to march through the country, destroying barns and grain-ricks, appropriating the farmer's pigs and chickens, driving off his cattle and horses, and pillaging the stores and the smoke-houses in the cities and villages? It is right, if war is right; it is a common and sometimes a necessary war measure. Is it right to kill men who have been guilty of no crime by thousands and tens of thousands? It is right, if war is right; this is the immediate object in view when people go to war. Is it right for the labor unions to endeavor to coerce men to join their ranks under pain of starvation? It is right, if war is right; it is a natural war measure. Is it right for an employer to discharge men because they belong to a union? It is right, if war is right; it is attacking the stronghold of the enemy. Many things which, in a state of peace, are inexcusable and even criminal, are justified, as everybody says, by the laws of war. Falsehood, deception, violence, homicide are the very substance of war. In a state of peace it would seem an abominable piece of tyranny to insist that no man should be permitted to earn his daily bread in the trade which he had practiced all his life, unless he would join the trades-union. In a state of peace it would be a gross outrage upon personal liberty for an employer to discharge his workmen for belonging to a society which they had formed to promote their own interests. These are war measures. This fact cannot be too strongly emphasized. Let us get clearly before our minds exactly what we are doing and why we are doing it.

Of course, both parties to the conflict claim that this warfare is purely metaphorical; that they neither propose nor condone illegal measures. But it is hard in such a deadly controversy to keep within the law. It is inevitable that coercion should take violent forms. Society must deal sharply with such disturbances, but it is not easy to prevent them. They are indefensible, they are criminal, yet they are terribly logical. But even those coercive measures on both sides which keep within the law can be justified only as war is justified. If war is a good thing, they are good things. If war is evil, they cannot be good. What, then, shall we say about this fundamental question?

#### IS WAR A GOOD THING?

Is a state of war the natural and proper state of mankind? Are the happiness, the prosperity, and the morality of the people at large promoted by the maintenance of warfare?

We shall agree, doubtless, that war is not the best employment for human beings; that it is not, on the whole, a good thing for people to be divided into classes and arrayed in armies for the purpose of encroaching upon one another's liberties or possessions. Surely the world is not enriched by warfare; it is impoverished, rather. While men are fighting they are not producing wealth; they are consuming what has already been produced, and they are very likely destroying, wantonly, about as much as they consume. This war between labor and capital, as we have seen, is about the division of the product of industry; and it is certain that the more they fight the less they will have to divide. The more constant and persistent the fighting is, the smaller every man's share of the world's wealth must be.

But this is not the worst of it. Such a warfare as this destroys the moral wealth of the nation even faster than its material wealth. It tends to make men bitter, suspicious, cruel; it turns neighbors against each other; it keeps the embers of resentment and hate all the while smoldering. This is the saddest part of the whole business. Those who have some knowledge of the temper of the combatants know that suspicion and distrust and ill-will have been steadily growing more intense on both sides. Surely it cannot be well for men to cherish such feelings toward one another, and one cannot help wondering whereunto this will grow. In a recent letter from over the sea, written by one who is giving his life for the welfare of the working people, are these solemn words: "There is a strong feeling among employers and employed that the cruel conflict between capital and labor, aggravated by competition, is destroying some of the best elements in human character." This is the kind of destruction most to be dreaded. When the old feelings of friendliness are gone, when a sullen envy and a rankling hatred have taken their places, the very foundations of the social order will be gone, and chaos and anarchy will be at hand. None of us will be very rich or very happy when that time comes.

#### SLAVERY IS WORSE THAN WAR.

WAR is not, then, a good thing. Yet there are evils worse than war. In the olden times the men who did the world's work were mainly slaves. There was no warfare then between capital and labor, because labor was owned by capital. That was not a good state of things for the laborer, and it was no better for the capitalist, though Carlyle lauded it and longed for its return. It is better that the laborer should be a free man, even though some measure of conflict and suffering be the price



of his emancipation. And if the laborer could see that the tendency of the industrial system under which he was living was to reduce him to a state little better than slavery, so that he would be dependent upon his employer, so that his chances to rise in the social scale would grow steadily less—if the laborer could see that this was the steady drift of the existing system, then, I think, he would be justified in fighting against that fate; in being willing to die rather than submit to it.

War is always a terrible evil; but it is sometimes the lesser of two evils. The degradation of a large class in society would be a greater evil than a war undertaken by that class to prevent such degradation. Now, it is certain that the wage-workers of this country feel that they are in danger of social degradation; in danger of falling behind the rest of the community in the march of industrial progress; in danger of becoming, to a great extent, dependent upon their employers, or upon the community at large, for subsistence and livelihood. We must do them the justice of recognizing this as the real reason of the widespread discontent that exists among them. The certainty that they are losing ground socially, and the fear that they may come to want and dependence, are the sources of the present tendency to combine for offensive and defensive warfare.

I am not referring to any such outbreak as that which, at this writing, is taking place in Chicago. That is not war; it is rapine, assassination, savagery. It is not the work of the Knights of Labor, nor of any other labor organization; it is led by men who, in the brutal harangues by which they stirred up the mob, denounced the Knights of Labor; men who have no part nor lot in the legitimate labor organizations; who, by creed and profession, are simply destroyers. It is a cruel injustice to identify these miscreants with the army of labor. The labor forces sometimes make sad mistakes and commit serious offenses, but nothing like this fiendishness can be charged upon them. It is not with such weapons that they are waging war. No wrongs ever existed, in any state of society, which could justify the methods of these men. I am not, then, discussing their complaints. I am considering how the matter lies in the minds of the great body of sober, industrious workmen.

#### THE ARMY OF THE DISCONTENTED.

SOME time ago Mr. Powderly described the working classes in this country as the "army of the discontented." He meant that there were enough of the discontented to make a large army; but it is also true that it

is their discontent that is leading them to organize themselves into an army, that they may the better do battle against the evils which cause their discontent. If they are right in thinking that they are losing ground, if they are reasonable in their fears about the future, then they are justified in organizing thus for protection and defense.

Are they right? I will not try to answer so large a question; I will only indicate the answer that the thoughtful workingman is inclined to give. To begin with, the fact that this country is rapidly getting rich is a fact that the workingman, though not a political economist, knows very well. The evidences of this growing wealth are before his eyes. I will not rehearse the familiar figures paraded during the last two years by so many persons for so many purposes; by Mr. Blaine, to prove that national salvation could not be found in any other than the Republican party; by Mr. George, to show that poverty and progress advance with equal step. Unless the figures of the census are greatly at fault, the wealth of the nation is increasing much more rapidly than its population. With this great increase of wealth, with the enormous development of lands and mines, and with an improvement in machinery which is said to double the productive power of our manufacturing industries every seven years, it would seem that the average annual income of the individual must be greatly increased. Of some classes of the population this seems to be true. To speak of the class with whose circumstances I am most familiar, I should say that clergymen must be receiving incomes at least fifty per cent. larger than they were receiving twenty-five years ago. It is certain that they are living much more expensively now than they were living then; that they can afford many luxuries of furniture and decoration and travel that they could not then afford. This is not probably true of all the country ministers, but of the clergy as a class I believe it is true. The clergy are not exceptionally prosperous; the same is true of the other professions. The average lawyer or the average physician gets a far better living to-day than he got twenty-five years ago. I think that the salaries of teachers, and salesmen, and book-keepers, and clerks in the great offices have also been considerably advanced. Besides these, between the capitalists on the one hand and the wage-laborers on the other, there is a large class of persons who render professional and personal services of various sorts, many of whom are well remunerated. Such are musicians and teachers of music, artists and teachers of art, actors and purveyors of public diversions. This class has greatly increased



within the period under consideration, and is much better paid for its services now than formerly. A large share of the national income falls into the hands of such persons.

#### THE INCOME OF THE WAGE-WORKER.

WITHOUT considering the condition of the employing classes, it is evident, therefore, that signs of increasing prosperity are visible in other parts of society. But how is it with people who work for wages? Some of the English statisticians have been trying to prove that the income of the wage-laborers in that country has increased as rapidly as that of any other class; but the validity of this cheerful conclusion is by no means established. The latest and apparently the most thorough investigation, by Professor Leone Levi, shows that the actual money-wage of the English laborer has increased during the past twenty-seven years about thirty per cent., while the cost of meat and other necessaries of life has also risen almost but not quite as much; so that the English laborer is a little better off to-day than he was twenty-seven years ago. Is this the case with the American wage-laborer? The statistics do not permit us to dogmatize. Professor Richmond M. Smith has shown us some of the fallacies of the labor figures. The doctrine of averages has not been well understood by some of our statisticians, and their conclusions are not trustworthy. Two or three considerations must be borne in mind in determining this question.

The first is the fact that in most industries work is much less continuous and stoppages are far more frequent and more prolonged now than formerly. If the day wages are larger, the annual wages may still be smaller. The precariousness of employment is now a serious matter to most workmen.

The second fact to be considered is the effect of machinery in reducing the demand for skilled labor. To take a single example: the iron-work of carriages was nearly all made by hand twenty-five years ago; and the blacksmiths employed in the carriage-shops were skilled workmen, who could forge any part of the iron-work of a carriage, and who commanded good wages. Most of these irons are now stamped out by machinery, and the hand-work is so subdivided that very few skilled men will be found in a large factory; the hand who tends a machine, and who can learn his work in a week or two, cannot, of course, obtain the remuneration paid to the superior mechanic of the days before the war.

The third fact is the increased cost of many of the necessaries of life. Clothing and flour and some groceries are somewhat cheaper; rent,

which is the largest item in the poor man's expenditure, has increased, and meats, vegetables, butter, milk, and fuel are much dearer. On the whole, then, it may be questioned whether the average annual wages of the average workingman will purchase for him any more of the necessaries of life to-day than it would in the year before the war.

Mr. Carroll D. Wright, the most experienced and the most judicious of our labor statisticians, estimates that from 1860 to 1881 wages increased about thirty-one per cent., and prices about forty-one per cent. If this estimate is to be trusted, the workingman was a little worse off in 1881 than in 1860; and the year 1881 was an exceptionally prosperous year for the working people.

Nevertheless, as I have said, it is not well to dogmatize. We need more light on this question. Over-confident statements on either side are not to be encouraged. All I can say is that such light as I can get inclines me to the belief that the real annual wages of labor are little, if any, higher to-day than they were in 1860. If this is all that can be said, then the wage-workers are falling behind the rest of the community; for, between 1860 and 1880 the wealth of the whole country increased from sixteen billions of dollars to forty-three billions, or one hundred and seventy per cent., and the average income must have been very considerably increased.

#### THE WORKINGMAN'S OUTLOOK.

IN 1860 the value of the manufactured goods produced in this country was eighteen hundred millions of dollars; in 1880 it was fifty-three hundred millions, almost three times as much. This is the pile to be divided. The number of the persons among whom it is to be divided has grown about sixty per cent.—but not half as fast as the pile has grown. And now, when the working classes come up to get their share of the pile, they complain and rebel. "What is the matter with you?" asks some rather thoughtless onlooker. "Are you not getting as much as you ever got?" "Perhaps we are," is the answer; "but that pile was produced very largely by our labor; it is about three times as large as it was twenty-five years ago, and it looks to us as though we ought to get a good deal more than we got then. Other people, who do not labor with their hands, are getting more out of it now than they got then; the traders as a class, the professional people, the people on salaries, most of them, are able to live in a great deal better style now than they could afford a quarter of a century ago; while as for the capitalists and employers, they certainly show us many evi-



dences of greatly increased wealth. Some of us can remember the social conditions of twenty-five years ago, and the signs of opulence and splendor then visible were few and insignificant, compared with what we see nowadays. We can compare in our memory the most luxurious sections and environs of New York and Boston and Philadelphia and Cleveland and Chicago then with what we see to-day, and the increase in the magnificence is amazing. There were a number of fine turnouts at Saratoga and Newport in 1860; but the luxury of that day was plebeian simplicity compared with the extravagance of to-day. Long Branch was a cluster of simple wooden cottages then; travel up and down the Jersey coast to-day, and see the oriental pomp and magnificence that spread themselves all over that favored region. Much the same can be said of the Atlantic coast north of Boston. Such sights are common. We should know by the evidence of our eyes, if the census had nothing to say about it, that the wealth of this country is increasing very fast; we can see where the bulk of it is going; and we know, by a bitter experience, that we are getting a very small share of it.

"We read the newspapers too, and know something of that class of plutocrats which has sprung up in this country within twenty-five years. Some of us can remember the time when there were only one or two men in the country worth a million dollars; now there are hundreds of them. We pick up a newspaper and read such an item as this, which appeared in many of the journals in the month of January, 1880: 'The profits of the Wall street kings the past year were enormous. It is estimated that Vanderbilt made thirty millions; Jay Gould, fifteen millions; Russell Sage, ten millions; Sidney Dillon, ten millions; James R. Keene, eight millions; and several others from one to two millions each, making a grand total for ten or twelve estates of about eighty millions of dollars.' We know, of course, that there is some exaggeration about this; but if half of it is true, the story is ominous. What is more, we know that these rich men are gaining control of our courts and our legislatures, and of the Congress of the United States, and they get the legislation that protects their interests and builds up their fortunes, and that taxes us to enrich them. It looks as though we had a system of things under which the rich were sure to grow richer, and the poor, at the best, to remain as they are, shut down to a bare subsistence. We do not like the prospect. We think it is not fair. We are not going to submit to it, if we can help ourselves; and we see no other way

but to band ourselves together for mutual protection and defense, and fight against this adverse fate."

Such is the reply of the more intelligent and sober of the wage-workers to the critic who cavils at their discontent. I submit that they make out, at any rate, a *prima facie* case. I submit that what they say has so much reason and justice that no right-minded man can dismiss it with a growl and a sneer. Their fears of social degradation are not groundless. As things are going now, it looks as though they would steadily be forced by the combinations above them to remain at the very bottom of the ladder, while the rest are climbing over their heads to independence and opulence. And since this is the day and age of combinations, since capital in a thousand ways is forming combinations for its own advantage, who will deny to labor the right to combine for the assertion of its just claims?

#### LABOR MUST HAVE BELLIGERENT RIGHTS.

COMBINATION means war, I admit. Combinations, whether of capital or of labor, are generally made in these days for fighting purposes. And war is a great evil—no doubt of that. But it is not the greatest of evils. The permanent social degradation of the people who do the world's work would be a greater evil. And if, by combination, the wage-workers can resist the tendencies that are crowding them down, and can assert and maintain their right to a proportional share of the growing wealth, then let them combine, and let all the people say, Amen!

The state of the industrial world is a state of war. And if war is the word, then the efficient combination and organization must not all be on the side of capital; labor must be allowed to make the combinations necessary for the protection of its own interests. While the conflict is in progress, labor has the same right that capital has to prosecute the warfare in the most effective way. If war is the order of the day, we must grant to labor belligerent rights. The sooner this fact is recognized, the better for all concerned. The refusal to admit it has made the conflict, thus far, much more fierce and sanguinary than it would otherwise have been.

So far as the students of political economy are concerned, it is now, I believe, universally agreed that the right of the workmen to combine cannot be questioned. Professor Sumner, who represents the old school of *laissez faire* economists, and President Walker, who represents the new historical school, are equally emphatic in their assertion of the right of the workmen to stand together in trade-unions for the defense of their own interests.



And the more reasonable of the employers are also beginning to see the point. Mr. James Means, a leading shoe manufacturer of Massachusetts, in an address to his employees last autumn, uttered these sensible words: "If the public assumes an attitude of antagonism toward trades-unions as a whole, the sense of injustice felt by the working people will bring them at last to seek redress by extreme measures. I believe that orderly trades-unions are to be encouraged. . . . Labor is the poor man's commodity; it is the only thing he has to sell; he must get the highest price for it that he can by legitimate means. The price which labor will bring is the market price. What is the market price of any commodity? It is the point where the 'bull movements' and the 'bear movements' exactly counterbalance each other. The fact that labor brings a certain price in the market does not mean that such is a fair market price. It may be a price based upon injustice. If there is any one who does not believe this, let him consider what would be the effect upon the market price of wheat, or any such commodity, if such price were governed entirely by the 'bears,' and if the 'bulls' were to cease their action. What is a trades-union? It is a 'bull movement' in the labor market. Can any one wish to see the price of that commodity which we call labor governed by the 'bears' alone? The 'bears' are organized, and no one complains. Is it fair that the price of labor should be fixed by powerful organizations opposed by weak individuals? Is it not rather to be desired that a more reasonable price should be fixed by organization met by organization?" Other utterances of the same tenor might be quoted.

The indications are, then, that in this warfare the belligerent rights of the wage-workers will soon be recognized. Strong combinations of employers still insist that they will never recognize them, but they are fighting against fate; the community at large concedes the right to the workingmen, and those who stand out will find it hard to stem the current.

#### WHICH WILL WIN?

So the battle is joined. Capital and labor confront each other, both organized and resolute, both determined to win. What will be the issue? A year or two ago we should have said without hesitation, Capital will win; it is stronger and better organized, and it has the sinews of war. Up to that time the victory had almost always been on the side of capital. The great majority of the strikes had been unsuccessful. But within the last year matters have taken a turn. The organization of the laborers is much more perfect and more formidable now than ever before. It is by no

means clear that it may not prove a match for its antagonist. At any rate, things have now assumed such a shape that we may fairly expect to see some destructive fighting. The combinations on both sides are so strong that they ought to be able to do each other, and the whole country, a great deal of damage. It must be possible for them to paralyze the industries of the nation; to waste a good part of its savings; to dig the chasm that separates the employer from the employed a great deal deeper and wider than it now is; and to sow seeds of jealousy and spite that will bear a woful harvest through many generations. *Is it not a good time to stop and ask the question whether this warfare is really worth while?*

#### IS IT SUBJUGATION?

WHEN people go to war, they generally have before them one of two possible issues of the conflict. Each combatant may be determined on a complete triumph over the other—a triumph that shall result in exterminating or subjugating or enslaving the other; or each combatant may desire to make an exhibition of his strength which shall enforce the respect of the other and secure honorable terms of peace. It is well for these combatants to determine, before they go any further, whether they desire to subjugate one another.

Do the employing class think it would be a good thing to subjugate the wage-laborers—to reduce them to a condition in which they would be practically slaves or dependents? Do the employing class want to keep the wages of the laboring class down as nearly as they can to the level of subsistence? Doubtless there are selfish and greedy men among them who would care very little what became of the working people, so long as they were able to make themselves rich. But I am sure that the employers of labor as a rule will cherish no such heartlessness; they know that it would be fatal to our national life if the class of wage-laborers became a permanently degraded class; they know that peace and prosperity cannot abide in the land unless all classes have an equal chance and a fair prospect. What is more, when they look at the matter from the lowest materialistic standpoint, they know that the wage-laborers constitute a very large share of the consumers of goods; that if they are able to purchase nothing but the bare necessities of life, trade will be dull; that when they have plenty of money in their pockets trade will be brisk; that it is not, therefore, for the interest of the manufacturing and mercantile classes that the laboring classes should be reduced to the verge of starvation. Capital is not such a fool as to



wish to push this war to the subjugation of its antagonist.

Neither does labor, I trust, desire to subjugate capital. That, to be sure, is the socialistic programme: the theory of socialism is that the capital shall all belong to the state, and shall be owned and controlled by the workers; that there shall be no private enterprise; that all the business of production and transportation and exchange shall be managed by state officials. But we are not ready yet for such a revolution. Beyond all question, the industrial system which is based on private enterprise is the best system practicable at the present time, and will be for a long time to come. It needs to be modified, but it cannot be overthrown without disaster to the working classes. Business will be managed for a good while yet by captains of industry; and it is for the interest of the people who do the world's work that it should be. Larger gains, on the whole, will come to them through this management properly modified than through any which they could substitute for it. The attempt to destroy or even cripple capitalistic enterprise is suicidal. So then it is absurd and even monstrous for either of these combatants to dream of subjugating the other. It is for the interest of each that the other should be free and prosperous and contented and hopeful.

The other rational object that men have in fighting is the assertion of their rights and the demonstration of their prowess. They want to make it evident that it is not safe to encroach upon their liberties; they want to lay the foundations of an honorable peace. Have not these two combatants been fighting long enough to accomplish this object? Surely labor has reason enough to respect and even dread the power of capital; and is not capital by this time sufficiently impressed with the power of labor? Is it not a good time for the contending parties to ground their arms, and shake hands, and sit down, and have a frank and friendly conference? Is not this business of war a senseless, brutal, barbarous business, at best? Does either side expect to do itself any good by fighting the other? It is about as rational as it would be for the right hand and the left hand to smite each other with persistent and deadly enmity, or for the eyes and the ears to array themselves against each other in a remorseless feud. It is a sorry comment on our civilization that here, at the end of the nineteenth Christian century, sane and full-grown men, whose welfare depends wholly on the recognition of their mutual interests and on the coöperation of their efforts, should be ready to spend a good share of their time in

trying to cripple or destroy one another. It is not only wicked, it is stupid; it is not simply monstrous, it is ridiculous.

Are not the employers ready, by this time, to hear reason? Have they not had fighting enough for the present? Are they not willing to make peace? If so, the first thing for them to do is to face the fact that the wage-workers, by whose labor they are gaining their wealth, are entitled to a little better share of the joint product than they are getting now; that they have a perfect right to expect it, to ask for it, and to combine for the purpose of getting it. When that fact is frankly admitted, arbitration of labor disputes will follow as a matter of course.

#### EIGHT HOURS OR TEN?

THE demand for fewer hours of labor must also be fairly considered. It does not seem, on the face of it, altogether unreasonable. With the continual improvements in machinery it is not at all incredible that the world's wants can be supplied by eight hours' work in a day. Would it not be vastly better for the health, the morals, and the thrift of the community to have our shops and factories going eight hours a day all the year round than to have them go ten hours a day for nine or ten months, and be idle all day for two or three months in the year, which is the present order in large sections of the country? The question whether the daily working time can be reduced one-fifth with no diminution in the daily wage is, of course, a question that must be settled on economical rather than sentimental principles. But some interesting experiments tend to show that, even when machinery is a large factor in production, the product of eight hours' work will be much more than four-fifths of the product of ten hours' work. The reduction of the time will not proportionately reduce the product, and should not, therefore, proportionately reduce the wage.

It is often said that increased wages and shorter hours will only promote recklessness and dissipation among the men; that the addition to their income would go to the saloons; that the enlargement of their leisure would result in debauchery. Such statements are too sweeping. Some of the more ignorant and degraded of the men would be affected in this way, no doubt, but it would not be true of all of them; it would not, I trust, be true of the majority of them. The new hope, the enlarged opportunity, would make the better elements among them self-respecting and frugal; their leisure would not all go to the uses of the flesh. The most careful English student of this question, Professor Leone Levi, bears this testimony: "As a rule, and



in the long run, scarcity, low wages, and scantiness of food go hand in hand with high mortality, drunkenness, and crime; while abundance, high wages, and full consumption go hand in hand with low mortality, temperance, and good behavior. A sudden increase of wages, as in the colliery districts in 1872-3, may find the recipients utterly unprepared for their good fortunes. And so we have heard of miners indulging in champagne wine, and of puddlers purchasing for themselves sealskin waistcoats. But reason speedily asserts her higher sway. The housewife eagerly arrests a portion of the higher wages to furnish the bare rooms, to fill the empty cupboard, and to clothe the children. Little by little, as the novel condition with its bountiful stores is realized, self-respect increases, sobriety of conduct is induced, and the family as a whole rises to habits of virtue and prosperity.\*

This is the result which we have good reason to expect, not by any means universally, but on the whole, and in the long run, from the improvement in the laborer's condition. Some laborers cannot bear prosperity; some employers cannot. Most employers, I dare say, have an abiding conviction that it would not hurt them in the least to be a little better off, and they may safely reason in the same way with regard to their men. On the whole, and in the long run, happiness is better for men than misery, plenty better than want, hope better than despair. Every effort that is made for the amelioration of humanity rests on that assumption.

#### IS SELF-INTEREST A GOOD FOUNDATION ?

SOME employers chafe under the new demands of labor. Doubtless these demands are sometimes arrogant and unreasonable; is this to be wondered at? War is an essentially unreasonable business; it is not by reason that its issues are determined, but by force. "It is a pity," men say, "if an employer cannot manage his business to suit himself." It may be a pity, but it is true. If by this phrase is meant managing his business solely in his own interest, that is exactly what he cannot do. The assumption that he can is one of the bottom causes of all this trouble. It is true that employers have long been taught that if they were perfectly selfish in the management of their business, the results would be beneficent; that this kingdom of industry is the one department of human activity with which conscience and good-will have no normal relation; that self-interest is and must be the sole ruler of this realm. Most of them have believed this doctrine;

\* "Wages and Earnings of the Working Classes," p. 35.

some of them have acted accordingly; but many of them have behaved a great deal better than the theory required them to behave, and have mixed not a little humanity with their business, thinking, no doubt, all the while that they were doing a silly thing. It was not a silly thing. The wisdom of their hearts was sounder than the theories of their heads. The doctrine which bases all the relations of employer and employed upon self-interest is a doctrine of the pit; it has been bringing hell to earth in large installments for a good many years. There is no department of human conduct in which pure egoism is a safe guide. No employer can manage his business exclusively in his own interest. It is not exclusively his business. The men who do the work are in reality his business partners, and he is bound to think of them, and care for them, and manage the business in their interest as well as his own. This is what employers must do if they want peace. You can have hell in your factory, or you can have heaven there, just which you please. If it is hell that you want, build your business on the law of hell, which is simply, "Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost!" Out of that will come wars and fightings, perennial and unrelenting. If it is heaven that you want, then build your business on the law of the kingdom of heaven, which is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." That will put you in the path of peace.

#### INDUSTRIAL PARTNERSHIP.

If peace is better than war, the employer's first problem must be to find a way of getting his enterprise on a peace basis. He can only do that by identifying his men with himself in the hopes, the prospects, the rewards of their joint undertaking. It begins to be evident to many employers that industrial partnership in some form is the next step in the evolution of our industrial system. This method has been thoroughly tried in scores of establishments, large and small, upon the continent of Europe, with splendid and almost unvarying success. Multitudes of people, who never have tried it, and have never seen it tried, and who know nothing about it, are free to say that it would not work; but what is the judgment of such doctrinaires worth in the face of the almost unbroken experience of the hundreds who have tried it? It is hard to keep one's patience when those who profess to be "practical men" set up their *ipse dixit* against the solid achievements of thirty years of peaceful and prosperous industry conducted upon this basis.

I have once before called attention in these pages to the inspiring recital by Mr. Sedley



Taylor\* of the progress of this principle in Europe. Quite a number of important firms and companies in this country have been practicing it with entire success for several years; and the rapidity with which the movement has been advancing since the beginning of the present year is something notable. We shall soon have a chance to see for ourselves whether profit-sharing will work in this country.

The common objections to this method are easily answered. "Some years there are no profits to divide," it is said. True; and in such years the workmen would get their regular wages, but no bonus at the end of the year.

"But this would make them dissatisfied and rebellious," it is urged. "They would think they had been cheated." This is assuming that they are hopelessly unreasonable and unjust. It is probable that if the employer really wishes to make his men the sharers of his prosperity, he will be able to make them believe it, and that they will forego their dividend without complaint.

"But there are sometimes losses," it is said, "and it is not fair that the men should share in the profits unless they share in the losses also." Let that be granted. But the system provides for laying aside a reserve fund in the prosperous years, out of which losses could be made up in the unprosperous years. Thus the workmen do share in the losses.

"But the profits are none too large now," it is urged; "to lessen them by an additional dividend to labor would cripple many industries." The census makes it plain that the laborer might have a larger share of the profits without doing anybody any injustice; but this point may be waived. It is enough to say that all the economists declare that whatever renders labor more efficient is a clear gain both to labor and to capital; it makes a larger product to divide between them. And it is the general testimony of those who have tried profit-sharing, that it makes the laborer more industrious and more economical of materials and tools; that the expense of superintendence is largely reduced; that the employer has as much left after he has paid the laborer his share of the profit as he had before. A slight acquaintance with human nature would make it easy to believe that this might be.

It does not seem at all incredible that business might be more prosperous on a peace basis than on a war basis; and it is at least possible that the employer could put it on a peace basis by making his men his business

\* "Profit-Sharing in Industry." London: Kegan Paul & Co.

partners, and letting them share with himself in the rewards of their joint industry. I will venture to predict that peace will never come to stay until this principle, under some form, has been introduced into the industrial order.

#### WILL THE WORKINGMEN MAKE PEACE?

WHAT answer now shall we hear from the men of toil to this burning question? Shall it be peace or war? Before they give their voices for the continuance of war, some things should be well considered.

In the first place, they ought to see that the employing class is not their worst enemy. It is not the employing class, as such, that is absorbing the wealth of this country, so much as it is the gamblers and the political corruptionists. A pretty large share of the plutocrats have gained their wealth by gambling operations in the stock and produce exchanges, and by bribing city councils and legislatures and courts and congresses. With franchises and legislative favors and judicial decisions thus obtained, they have robbed the public for their own benefit. The net profits of industry are not excessive, but the plunder of these parasites is enormous. After they have filled their pockets out of the product of industry, there is a good deal less to be divided between employers and laborers. The working classes are just as much responsible for their existence as their employers are. If workingmen had been as careful in choosing men to represent them in the city councils and the legislatures as they ought to have been, this class of parasites could never have flourished as they have done. The first fight for them to make is against these parasites of industry.

In the second place, the workingmen should make up their minds before they push this fight any further whether they wish to overthrow the present system of industry, or whether they prefer to modify it, so that it shall be more favorable to their interest. They may be able to destroy it; but it will be well for them to count the cost before entering on that campaign. Samson overthrew the temple of the Philistines; but it is instructive to remember what became of Samson.

In the third place, if workingmen do not want to exterminate private enterprise, and if they expect to have business relations with the employing class, they cannot too soon unlearn the bitter and violent habits of speech and thought into which they have been falling of late in their discussion of the labor question. The sweeping denunciations of the capitalists as thieves and swindlers and robbers, in which some of them are wont to indulge, are both unwise and unjust. Successful business relations cannot be maintained among men who



cherish such feelings toward one another. There are heartless and selfish men among employers; so there are among laborers. Wrongs are done on both sides; people who are at war are not apt to be scrupulous about respecting one another's rights. Many employers are heartily desirous of doing their men full justice; and the men by no means always show a proper appreciation of this good-will. Permit me to say that I know something about this war; I have been in the thick of it for thirty years, trying to make peace, and helping to care for the sick and the wounded; and I know that the wrong is not all on one side, and that the harsh judgments and the fierce talk of both sides are inexcusable.

In the fourth place, if workingmen want business put on a peace basis, let them say so, and show that they mean it. If they desire to have labor disputes settled by arbitration, let them frankly and good-naturedly ask for arbitration, and show that they have a reasonable temper and a purpose to stand by a fair award. If they want profit-sharing, let them put that into their platforms, and make it clear to their employers that they can be trusted to give the scheme a fair trial. Some of them are hoping for coöperation; for an organization of industry in which the men who do the work shall own the capital, and receive both profits and wages. To every such enterprise, God speed! It takes a high degree of intelligence and self-control to coöperate in production; workingmen are gaining these qualifications steadily; they will be ready for it before long. But production, on any basis, requires capital—capital to purchase the plant, and capital to live on while the product is maturing; and capital can be got by those who are not born rich in only two ways—by saving, and by stealing. Workingmen cannot afford to steal; they will never prosper if they do. It is true that many of our plutocrats got their money by stealing from the people at large, but their prosperity is a blight upon them and upon the nation. If they have been unjust, our workingmen cannot afford to rebuild the industry of the country on the same foundation of injustice. It is only by economy that the capital can be accumulated by which they can coöperate; and it is to be hoped that profit-sharing will put them in the path that leads to this goal.

#### THE INDUSTRIAL CRISIS.

The present appears to be a critical time in the history of labor. Within the past few months our workingmen have suddenly come to the consciousness of great power. Their more compact organization, their more effective weapons of war, have given them advan-

tages that they never had before. The question of the hour is whether they can use this power temperately and wisely. There are ominous signs of a disposition to employ it passionately and vindictively. Men who speak in the interests of selfish capital are heard to express the confident hope that the workingmen will soon overstep the bounds of prudence and justice and ruin their own prospects. That is the real danger. Doubtless, it is hard for those who are smarting under a sense of injustice to be always temperate and judicious; but the welfare of these men depends on keeping their heads cool. Vengeance does not belong to them; and they are strong enough now to be magnanimous.

It is easy for the organizations of labor to cripple by unreasonable demands the industries of whole sections. They have done this thing already more than once. In the stoppages and readjustments thus occurring, great suffering is caused and no advantage is gained. An unjust demand, even if it be temporarily enforced, always reacts on those who make it. The working classes have now tremendous power; they may easily employ it for self-destruction. It is quite possible for them to use their power tyrannically; and tyranny will not thrive in this day, the tyranny of a mob no more than the tyranny of an autocrat. This weapon of the boycott with which the labor unions have lately armed themselves is pretty sure to prove a boomerang. If they use it recklessly, there may easily arise a consumers' union, to fight them with their own fire—to patronize those whom they proscribe. Already the popular indignation at the unscrupulous use of this weapon is so strong that the publication of a boycott has proved, in several cases, an excellent advertisement of the boycotted dealer.

With all the improved enginery of war the labor unions are sure to find that war is dangerous business. It is all the more dangerous because of these improved weapons. It can never be anything else but perilous and destructive business. Let not these combatants on either side suppose that they can hurt and maim their antagonists and get no harm themselves!

Over all this wretched strife one can imagine those "better angels of our nature," whose ministry Abraham Lincoln once pathetically but vainly invoked, bending with divine compassion and crying to the embattled hosts with solemn rebuke and benignant appeal: "Is it well, brother men, is it well to fight? Is it not better to be friends? Are you not all children of one Father? Nay, are you not, as the great apostle said, members one of another? Your war is not only wholesale fratri-



cide, it is social suicide. It is little to say that you cannot afford to fight: you cannot live apart; you must live for one another. That is the way you were made to live; and you will never have anything but trouble and sorrow till you learn that way and walk in it. The stars in their courses will fight against you until you make peace with one another. Have we not had more than enough of war and its dismal noises and its spectral train of woes; more than enough of silent looms and fireless forges; of children's faces

pale with hunger, and women's sunken eyes; of hearts made fierce and hard by long-cherished enmities; of class arrayed against class and neighbor against neighbor? Oh, put it all away from you — the hate, the suspicion, the scorn; stand here together, brethren as you are, helpers of one another as you must be, and promise one another that you will do what you can, every one of you, to bring the day when between Labor and Capital there shall be no longer war, but peace for evermore."

*Washington Gladden.*



### THE WESTERN ART MOVEMENT.

WHERE the vineyards of Nicholas Longworth clothed the hilltops above Cincinnati within the memory of living men now stands a spacious art museum, and close beside it there will be an art-school building more generously appointed than any other in our land. In St. Louis, where French traders gathered with their furs since the opening of the century, a new art museum supplements the work of a school whose pupils profit by the latest lessons of South Kensington and German art centers, as well as by the academic teachings of Paris. Chicago, with citizens still living who watched the Indians depart, is building for her Art Institute a new museum. The money is ready for art museums in Milwaukee and Detroit. The Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts has established an art school of ambitious plans. The "first white male child born in Kansas" is trustee of a State Art Association, and men who fought for "free soil" are now collecting autotypes and casts. These plain facts have an eloquence of their own. Their story is told again in the art societies, exhibitions, and lectures of minor cities throughout the middle West and beyond. History has recorded the period of chasing or being chased by the red man, of clearing forests and breaking prairies, the marvelous growth of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, and the resultant wealth. But of the working of that most abstract of all ideas, the art feeling, little has been told. And now it is suddenly made manifest that the most active among the current phases of that formative condition which we call American art is the movement in progress throughout our West.

If this active interest in art were shown

only in the buying of costly paintings for private galleries, and the building of wonderful examples of architecture for private occupancy, it would have a very minor significance. These are the usual accompaniments of prosperity, too often the outward and visible signs of a theory of art as something concerning only a favored few, as represented only by paintings and statues in Dives's galleries. But the Western art movement with which we have to do is an expression of a broader and sounder idea. Some of our Western legislators have been sturdily defending the thirty per cent. duty upon works of art, doubtless in the firm belief that art is an extravagant luxury. But meantime the constituents of these gentlemen have proved their conviction that art not only gives pleasure to the many, but has such practical value as to be worth the investment of much money and time. The work has been done by an army of citizens without thought of private advantage. These museums and schools are of the people and for the people, at least in theory. There will be discouraging mistakes and experimental gropings, just as there have been museums which have become mere storehouses of curiosities, and schools enslaved by routine. But the West is progressive, eager to learn, and willing to profit by the lessons of past failures. Her substantial beginnings are the partial realization of ambitious plans.

#### I.

OVER a million dollars have been given to the art school and museum of Cincinnati within the last six years. This, like the foundation of the College of Music, is the ripened